

Wh-words + *ça*: a corpus study

Научный руководитель – А. А. -

Smirnova Anastasia Aleksandrovna

Студент (магистр)

Университет Париж Дидро, Париж, Франция

E-mail: sohytmotizin@gmail.com

Contrary to other discourse particles (Bayer & Obenauer 2011), French *ça* ('that') is not mobile and can only occur with wh-words. Obenauer 1974, Cheng and Rooryck 2001 (C&R) note that wh-*ça* must be in situ:

- (1) Tu as vu qui *ça* (cet après-midi) ? ('You have met who-*ça* (this afternoon)?')
- (2) *Qui *ça* as-tu vu ? ('Who-*ça* have you met?')

C&R also claim that "wh-*ça* questions are not echo-questions". "The wh-*ça* elements appear to be the exact opposite of the wh-*the hell* elements in English". "The French wh-*ça* can be considered to be the prime example of strongly D-linked wh-words", assuming "strongly D-linked wh-words do not undergo movement (see also Obenauer 1994). This D-linking property of wh-*ça* is probably related to the fact that the element *ça* ('that') occurs independently as a deictic pronoun in French." C&R do not mention the sluice use of wh-*ça*:

- (3) — J'ai vu quelqu'un. ('I saw someone.') — Qui *ça* ? ('Who-*ça*?')

We study ellipsis with wh-*ça* in French which raise a challenge for deletion-based approaches to ellipsis if the source of the sluice is a fronted wh-question (Merchant 2002): *John left I don't know when he left*. It would be compatible with a deletion approach if the source of the sluice is an in situ question (Abeillé 2015). C&R do not take into account the restriction of wh-*ça* to an informal register, while the clitic inversion in (2) is formal, our corpus data suggest that the unacceptability of (2) is due to a register clash rather than ungrammaticality.

We use the Frantext corpus of French literature, contemporary part (after 1960 = 1001 texts, 61,2 M words). *Ça* cannot occur with an anaphoric wh-word: **lequel ça* ('which-*ça*')? We thus search for wh-word followed by *ça* and the same wh-word followed by ? . We eliminate all cases where *ça* is the pronoun ('that'), for example in subject position (*Où ça fait mal* ? 'Where does it hurt?') or in right dislocation (*C'est quoi, ça* ? 'What's this?'). We thus have 481 occurrences (table 1), with a higher proportion of *comment ça* and *où ça*, and a lower proportion of *quoi ça* and *pourquoi ça*, compared to the bare wh-word in final position (in situ or sluice). We annotate wh-*ça* for extraction/ in situ/ ellipsis, taking only 104 occurrences for *comment* and 100 for *où*. We are left with 334 occurrences, among which 330 ellipsis (table 2). Contrary to previous literature, we found 2 examples of wh-*ça* extracted (4), with nonstandard *que* ('that') insertion (4b), as well as 2 in situ examples (5):

- (4) a. *Où ça qu'ils vont ces deux copains-là* ? ('Where-*ça* are they going these two friends?') (Sabatier 1985)

- b. *Et pourquoi ça vous feriez pendre mon papa, monsieur le duc* ? ('And why-*ça* would you hang my dad?') (Queneau 1965)

- (5) a. — *Mon papa il est mort. — Ton papa il est mort, quand ça* ? ('— My dad died. — Your dad died, when-*ça*?') (Mauriac 1961)

- b. *T'avais appris à tirer où ça* ? ('You had learned to shoot where-*ça*?') (Boudard 1982)

As for ellipsis, we distinguish between sluicing and stripping. We mostly found matrix sluices, especially in dialog, as well as 4 embedded sluices. Embedded sluice is limited to indirect speech (6a). We also have a few monologs (6b).

(6) a. [...] me demandant pourquoi ci pourquoi ça. ([...] wondering why-ci why-ça.) (Rochefort 1961)

b. Ma femme ? Quelle femme ? Où ça, ma femme ? ('Where-ça my wife?') (Pennac 1995)

Following Ginzburg & Sag 2000, we distinguish reprise-sluiice and direct-sluiice. We found direct-sluiices with an indefinite antecedent (7), an implicit antecedent (8a) or no antecedent (sprouting) (8b).

(7) Quelqu'un me l'a dit. — Qui ça ? ('Someone told me that. — Who-ça?') (Vargas 2008)

(8) a. — Bien sûr, je copie. — Qui ça ? — Damascius, Traité des Premiers Principes. ('— Of course, I copy. — Who-ça? — Damascius') (Roubaud 2002)

b. — Mlle Dreyfus ne travaille plus ici. Elle nous a quittés. — Quand ça ? ('— Mlle Dreyfus doesn't work here anymore. She left us. — When-ça?') (Gary 1974)

The interpretation requires contextual information: a non-elliptical question may be possible (Elle vous a quittés quand ça ? 'She has left you when-ça?') or not (*Qui ça vous l'a dit ? 'Who-ça told you that?').

Contrary to Yoshida (2015), wh-stripping is not limited to *why*-stripping and is very common with *comment ça*. Like reprise sluiices, wh-stripping questions the form which has been used. The reprise fragment can be any category: an adjective, a noun, an adverb, even a weak pronoun, an imperative or a whole sentence:

(10) — C'est curieux, fis-je en tournant mon regard vers la ville. — Pourquoi ça, curieux ? ('Why ça curious?') (Del Castillo 1981)

(11) — Avant, au moins, il y avait les mariages, les naissances, les vraies crises, les guerres, les révolutions, [...]. — Avant ? Quand ça, avant ? ('Before? When-ça, before?') (Sollers 1987)

(12) — Ils ont arrêté Paul. [...] — Qui ça, ils ? ('Who-ça, they?') (Clavel 1968)

(13) — Laisse, dis-je. — Comment ça, laisse ? ('How-ça, leave (me)?') (Pennac 1995)

There can be vehicle change (14a) or not (14b). Notice also the change of interrogative form in (14a) (a *si*-question to reprise a questioning declarative); the indefinite changes in (14c).

(14) a. — Vous croyez ? dit le type, — Comment ça si je crois ? ('How-ça if I believe?') (Benoziglio 1974)

b. B : Qui est là ? D : C'est moi, c'est moi. B : Qui ça, moi ? ('Who-ça, me?') (Ionesco 1963)

c. — Elles ont emporté un certain nombre de caisses. — Quoi ! Comment ça, des caisses ? ('What! How-ça, boxes?') (Garat 2010)

We conclude that fronting *wh-ça* is possible (contrary to C&R) but very rare. We found that matrix sluiice is the main use of *wh-ça*. The rarity of in situ uses and extracted cases cast doubt on a derivation of *wh-ça* sluiice from non-elliptical sources, and argue for a direct interpretation approach (Ginzburg & Sag 2000). Contrary to C&R, reprise uses of *wh-ça* (with wh-stripping) are also well-attested. Future work will study more precisely the difference between the different *wh-ça* elements.

Источники и литература

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